

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9144

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 6423

TEHRAN FOR CNO

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA

SUBJ: CNO MEETING WITH DEPUTY MIN DEFENSE PRINCE TURKI

SUMMARY: CNO-TURKI MEETING FOCUSED ON TRAINING, SHIP DESIGN, AND RISING SNEP COST ESTIMATES. VISIT REINFORCED SAG IMPRESSION OF HIGH-LEVEL USG INTEREST IN MODERNIZING SAG MILITARY. SAUDI SLOTS AT ANNAPOLIS LIKELY TO BE RAISED DURING ELLSOWRTH TALKS. END SUMMARY.

1. CNO AND PARTY MET WITH DEP MIN DEF TURKI NOVEMBER 2 FOR TALKS LASTING HOUR AND A HALF. TURKI:

- A. RENEWED SAG REQUEST FOR ANNAPOLIS SPACES
 - B. ASKED FOR MORE REGULAR INFORMATION ON STATUS OF RSN SHIP DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
 - C. EMPHASIZED WISH THAT RSN PERSONNEL RECEIVE PRACTICAL, OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE ABOARD USN VESSELS, NOT SIMPLY TRAINING CRUISES ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR SAUDIS.
 - D. EXPRESSED MODA CONCERN OVER POSSIBILITY THAT DESIGN REQUIREMENTS MIGHT RESULT IN LOWER SPEED FOR RSN SHIPS THAN THAT ORIGINALLY SPECIFIED.
 - E. ASKED WHY NON-MAGNETIC ENGINES PREVIOUSLY PLANNED
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FOR MINE SWEEPERS WERE NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

F. EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER INCREASE IN SNEP FACILITIES
ESTIMATED COSTS AND REITERATED MODA NEED FOR ESTIMATES
WHICH WILL NOT BE SUBSEQUENTLY EXCEEDED.

2. IN REPLY, CNO: PROMISED TO LOOK INTO MATTER OF NAVAL
AND MARITIME ACADEMY AND TO PROVIDE PLAN FOR OPERATIONAL
CRUISE EXPERIENCE; STATED HE SHARED CONCERN OVER INFLA-
TIONARY PRICES INCREASES, WHICH WOULD ALSO AFFECT
PRICE OF RSN SHIPS, BUT NOTED USN FACED SAME PROBLEMS;
AND PROMISED MORE INFO TO RSN ON POINTS D AND E. CHUSMTM
PROMISED PROVIDE TURKI WITH COPY OF MONTHLY SHIP STATUS
REPORTS ALREADY BEING GIVEN TO RSN.

3. COMMENT: TURKI WAS PLEASED WITH ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY'S
NOTING THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS FIRST MIDEAST COUNTRY HE
HAD VISITED, AND WITH FACT THAT VISIT WAS BEING MADE SO
SOON AFTER ASSUMING DUTIES OF CNO. RAISING OF SOME POINTS
WHICH WOULD MORE APPROPRIATELY BE ADDRESSED AT LOWER
LEVEL WAS RESULT OF TURKI BEING UNPREPARED FOR MEETING
(HE BEGAN READING RSN BRIEFING MEMO ONLY AFTER ARRIVAL OF
CNO'S PARTY, AND WENT DOWN IT POINT BY POINT), BUT
MATTER ILLUSTRATES LOCAL TENDENCY TO BUCK EVEN TECHNICAL
QUESTIONS UP TO MINISTERIAL LEVEL. VISIT, FOLLOWING RECENT
VISIT OF SECRETARY MIDDENDORF, WAS ADDITIONAL SUCCESS-
FUL DEMONSTRATION OF HIGH LEVEL USN INTEREST IN SUCCESS
OF SNEP, AND REINFORCED SAG IMPRESSION OF USG'S SYMPATH-
ETIC INTEREST IN STRENGTHENING SAG MILITARY FORCES. TURKI
REMARKED THAT ANNAPOLIS QUESTION WOULD BE DISCUSSED
LATER--A PROBABLE REFERENCE TO UPCOMING ELLSWORTH TALKS.
AKINS

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